

What is claimed is:

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1. A massage method for a seat or body support system having more than one expandable chambers and including a pressure system for each expandable chamber and an exhaust system for each expandable chamber and a controller for operating the pressure and exhausts system the method comprising:

10 selecting a massage control index for operating the pressure system and exhaust system to control the pressures in each of said expandable chambers; and

controlling the pressures in each of the expandable chambers by connecting each of the expandable chambers to said pressure system to produce an inflow of a fluid to each of the expandable chambers followed by operating the exhaust system to produce an outflow of fluid from each of the previously inflated expandable chambers to produce a massage sequence in which each of the expandable chambers are selectively inflated and deflated by fluid flow to and from each of the expandable chambers.

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2. The method of claim 1 further characterized by providing the pressure system as a source of pressurized fluid; providing a supply valve for controlling fluid flow from the pressure source to each of the expandable chambers; and providing an exhaust valve for controlling the fluid flow from a previously inflated expandable chamber in a manner to produce individual chamber to chamber inflate followed by chamber to chamber deflate.

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3. The method of claim 2 further characterized by providing the exhaust system as a common exhaust; connecting said more than one expandable chambers to said common exhaust and opening said common exhaust in accordance with the massage index.

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4. The method of claim 2 further characterized by providing the pressure systems as a pressure pump; providing the exhaust system as an exhaust pump; connecting said pressure pump and said exhaust pump to said array of expandable chambers in accordance with the massage index.

5. The method of claim 1 further characterized by providing a user initiated switching means; and providing a range of desired massage indexes in accordance with user selected preferences; and selecting one of said desired massage indexes from said range to produce individual chamber to chamber inflate followed by chamber to chamber deflate.

6. The method of claim 1 further characterized by providing the more than one expandable chambers as expandable chambers in a back and seat support.

7. The method of claim 1 further characterized by operating the pressure system for each expandable chamber to equalize the pressure between predetermined ones of the expandable chamber as each of the predetermined ones of the expandable chambers are selectively inflated and deflated.

8. The method of claim 1 further characterized by providing a pressure sensor; providing multiple valves and a pump; providing a microcontroller programmed in response to a signal from said pressure sensor to operate the multiple valves and a pump to conduct an initial inflate of the more than one expandable chambers to a gross pressure level with all of the valves initially opening; said initial opening occurring prior to the cyclically connecting of each of the expandable chambers to the pressure source in accordance with the massage index.

9. The method of claim 1 further characterized by providing the more than one expandable chambers as a series of zones; said massage index including

first inflating each of said zones in a series fashion; said massage index thereafter including deflating each of said zones in a reverse series fashion.

10. The method of claim 1 further characterized by providing the more  
5 than one expandable chambers as a series of zones including a first zone, a second zone and a third zone; the massage index including equalizing the pressure in the first and second zones by fluid transfer therebetween; thereafter inflating only the first zone and deflating the second zone while the first zone remains inflated; thereafter equalizing the pressure in the first and second zones; thereafter inflating  
10 the second zone; thereafter deflating the first zone while the second zone remains inflated; equalizing the pressure in the second and third zones by fluid transfer therebetween; thereafter inflating only the third zone and deflating the second zone while the third zone remains inflated.

11. The method of claim 1 further characterized by providing the more  
15 than one air cells as first and second air cells (O, 1); providing a massage index that cyclically varies the pressure in the air cells by inflating the first air cell; equalizing pressure between the first and second air cells; deflating the first air cell; reinflating the first air cell; controlling the valved communication to  
20 equalize pressure between the first and second air cells following reinflation of the first air cell; and deflating the first air cell.

12. The method of claim 2 further characterized by providing the more  
25 than one air cells as first and second air cells (O, 1); providing a massage index that cyclically varies the pressure in the air cells by inflating the first air cell; equalizing pressure between the first and second air cells; deflating the first air cell; reinflating the first air cell; controlling the valved communication to  
30 equalize pressure between the first and second air cells following reinflation of the first air cell; and deflating the first air cell.

13. The method of claim 1 further characterized by providing the more than one expandable chambers as a series of zones including zone 0; zone 1; zone 2; zone 3; zone 4; zone 5; zone 6; zone 7; providing a massage index including equalizing the pressure in zones 0 and 1 by reducing the pressure in zone 1 and  
5 increasing the pressure in zone 0; inflate zone 0; deflate zone 1; equalize the pressure in zones 1 and 0 by fluid transfers from zone 0 to zone 1 reducing the pressure in zone 0 and increasing the pressure in zone 1; inflate zone 1; deflate zone 0; equilibrate zones 2 and 1 (air transfers from zone 1 to zone 2 reducing the pressure in zone 1 and increasing the pressure in zone 2); inflate zone 2; deflate  
10 zone 1; equilibrate zones 5 and 2 (air transfers from zone 2 to zone 5 reducing the pressure in zone 2 and increasing the pressure in zone 5); inflate zone 5; deflate zone 2; equilibrate zones 6 and 5 (air transfers from zone 5 to zone 6 reducing the pressure in zone 5 and increasing the pressure in zone 6); inflate zone 6; deflate zone 5; equilibrate zones 7 and 6 (air transfers from zone 6 to zone 7 reducing the  
15 pressure in zone 6 and increasing the pressure in zone 7); inflate zone 7; deflate zone 6; equilibrate zones 6 and 7 (air transfers from zone 7 to zone 6 reducing the pressure in zone 7 and increasing the pressure in zone 6); inflate zone 6; deflate zone 7; equilibrate zones 5 and 6 (air transfers from zone 6 to zone 5 reducing the pressure in zone 6 and increasing the pressure in zone 5); inflate zone 5; deflate  
20 zone 6; equilibrate zones 2 and 5 (air transfers from zone 5 to zone 2 reducing the pressure in zone 5 and increasing the pressure in zone 2); inflate zone 2; deflate zone 5; equilibrate zones 1 and 2 (air transfers from zone 2 to zone 1 reducing the pressure in zone 2 and increasing the pressure in zone 1); inflate zone 1; deflate zone 2; repeat.

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14. The method of claim 2 further characterized by providing the more than one expandable chambers as a series of zones including zone 0; zone 1; zone 2; zone 3; zone 4; zone 5; zone 6; zone 7; providing a massage index including equalizing the pressure in zones 0 and 1 by reducing the pressure in zone 1 and  
30 increasing the pressure in zone 0; inflate zone 0; deflate zone 1; equalize the pressure in zones 1 and 0 by fluid transfers from zone 0 to zone 1 reducing the

pressure in zone 0 and increasing the pressure in zone 1; inflate zone 1; deflate zone 0; equilibrate zones 2 and 1 (air transfers from zone 1 to zone 2 reducing the pressure in zone 1 and increasing the pressure in zone 2); inflate zone 2; deflate zone 1; equilibrate zones 5 and 2 (air transfers from zone 2 to zone 5 reducing the pressure in zone 2 and increasing the pressure in zone 5); inflate zone 5; deflate zone 2; equilibrate zones 6 and 5 (air transfers from zone 5 to zone 6 reducing the pressure in zone 5 and increasing the pressure in zone 6); inflate zone 6; deflate zone 5; equilibrate zones 7 and 6 (air transfers from zone 6 to zone 7 reducing the pressure in zone 6 and increasing the pressure in zone 7); inflate zone 7; deflate zone 6; equilibrate zones 6 and 7 (air transfers from zone 7 to zone 6 reducing the pressure in zone 7 and increasing the pressure in zone 6); inflate zone 6; deflate zone 7; equilibrate zones 5 and 6 (air transfers from zone 6 to zone 5 reducing the pressure in zone 6 and increasing the pressure in zone 5); inflate zone 5; deflate zone 6; equilibrate zones 2 and 5 (air transfers from zone 5 to zone 2 reducing the pressure in zone 5 and increasing the pressure in zone 2); inflate zone 2; deflate zone 5; equilibrate zones 1 and 2 (air transfers from zone 2 to zone 1 reducing the pressure in zone 2 and increasing the pressure in zone 1); inflate zone 1; deflate zone 2; repeat.

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